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ABSTRACT

The Emergency Administration and Planning program at the University of North Texas (Denton) is the only undergraduate degree-granting program in emergency management and training in the country. It is a 128-hour program based on a public administration curriculum, with additional coursework in behavioral analysis, sociology, rehabilitative studies, and emergency administration and planning. Course offerings have doubled in 2 years, with 36 semester hours of credit now available in emergency management. The program is leading the university in the development of computer graphics and state-of-the-art image projection techniques to enhance classroom learning. The technology is also used for authoring innovative computer-assisted-learning courses for the distant learner. Three staff members perform teaching and administrative duties. Expansion to a Master's program is anticipated. Student enrollment and semester hour production has increased over 400% in 4 years, with over 80 majors. Of the 20 graduates to date, 3 have received scholarships for the Master's program in public adminstration. Continued inclusion of the program as a special line item appropriation in the state budget is additional evidence of program success. (MSE)

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AASCU/ERIC MODEL PROGRAMS INVENTORY PROJECT

EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING INSTITUTE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

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AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

ABSTRACT

The Emergency Administration and Planning (EADP) program at the University of North (NT) is the only undergraduate degree-granting program in the country. Their long standing commitment to emergency management training and education was rewarded in 1983 by the state's approval of a Bachelor of Science degree in Emergency Administration and Planning. The program continues to demonstrate an innovative approach to education by the development and use of computer-graphic visual aids in the classroom. Graduates of this unique educational experience are serving their communities by providing critical emergency management expertise both in government and private sector organizations.

AASCU/ERIC MODEL PROGRAMS INVENTORY PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Within any profession there is an acute need for relevant postsecondary education. In any emerging profession, the need is particularly critical if that profession is to achieve credibility and permanence. The field of emergency management is such an emerging profession. The Institute for Emergency Administration and Planning (EADP) at the University of North Texas (NT) is meeting the challenge of providing the elements of this higher education curriculum. The hallmarks of this unique undergraduate degree program are innovation, service, and quality education.

NT's work in the emergency management field is both long-standing and innovative. From 1979 to 1983, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region VI contracted with the university ($1.5 million over a five-year period) to be the sole provider of in-service workshops which carried nationally recognized continuing education credit for public officials and private corporations. In 1983, NT conceived, developed, and received state approval to award the Bachelor of Science degree in Emergency Administration and Planning. This unique degree program continues to be the nation's sole provider of this critical educational program. NT has demonstrated a long-term commitment to the enhancement and professionalization of the emergency management career field.

BACKGROUND

One needs only to reflect on the devastating consequences of natural and technological disasters to appreciate the significance of the challenges facing the modern emergency manager. Bhopal, Mt. St. Helens, Three-Mile Island, and the Love Canal are constant historical reminders and predictors of the catastrophic effects of these hazards. Other than the EADP program at NT, emergency training is provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency through the various state Emergency Management Offices. Training courses stress situation specific, checklists of things to do, rather than more comprehensive, interdisciplinary studies. Some postsecondary educational institutions are offering related courses, but none has a comprehensive degree program such as that offered at NT. The quality and scope of the emergency management program offered at is not available at any other institution.

The increasing potential of catastrophic effects from both natural and technological disasters in our complex society has compounded the requirement for well-educated emergency managers. The magnitude of this current and projected manpower requirement was identified in a survey conducted by the International City

Managers Association in 1982. This study revealed that, of the more than 6,000 jurisdictions surveyed, the vast majority (87%) stated a need for emergency administration educational programs. In the state of Texas alone, there are more that 3,000 governmental units charged with specific emergency management responsibilities. Federal emergency planning offices, the private sector and human services organizations (e.g., Red Cross) swell the numbers of the organizations seeking personnel with the knowledge and expertise provided by the courses taught at North Texas.

In summary, the programs provided by FEMA through the states, while providing excellent training, do not have the resources nor the mandate to provide the necessary postsecondary education required by this emerging profession. NT has both the resources, mandate, and commitment to accomplish this task.

DESCRIPTION

The Bachelor of Science in Emergency Management is a 128 hour degree program based upon a Public Administration curriculum, with additional course work in Behavioral Analysis, Sociology, Rehabilitative Studies and Emergency Administration and Planning. A vigorous curriculum development and enhancement effort has resulted in a two-fold increase in course offerings in the past two years. It is now possible to accumulate up to 36 semester hours of credit in the emergency management discipline. The EADP program is leading the university in the development of computer graphics and state-of-the-art image projection techniques to enhance the classroom learning environment. This technology is also used in the "authoring" mode to develop innovative computer-assisted-learning courses for the distant learner. This will provide emergency managers the only such academically oriented program in the country. The first course will be available in 1990, with other courses to follow as time and funding permit.

With the acquisition of a new faculty member, there are now three staff members performing teaching and administrative duties. The increased manning will allow the expansion of the program from undergraduate level to the offering of a Masters Degree in Emergency Management. Current plans are to have this degree in the graduate catalog in 1991. This change in program scope will also lead to more institute involvement in the applied research areas. The undergraduate program will provide a solid foundation from which to expand.

RESULTS

The advent of the emergency management career field as a recognized profession has focused attention upon the dire need of well-educated, trained professionals to be available to manage the comprehensive emergency management programs. Student enrollment and semester hour production has increased

dramatically--over a 400% growth from 1984-88. Over 80 students are pursuing a Bachelors degree with emergency management as their major field of study.

Twenty students have graduated, with three of them receiving $8000 Master of Public Administration scholarships. This award rate attests to both the quality of the program and the students enrolled. Graduates have been very successful in obtaining employment and the future looks even brighter. The current Federal Emergency Management Agency/National Coordinating Council on Emergency Management (NCCEM) initiative to establish standards and credentials for this career field will significantly enhance the value of the NT graduates.

In recognition of the high quality of instruction, the EADP staff received a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to conduct a regional workshop for emergency managers from a five-state area. This workshop was well received and will provide the basis for an expanded workshop/seminar program offered throughout the country. In addition, the Texas State Department of Emergency Management (DEM) has requested the EADP staff to also conduct five additional FEMA one-week training courses.

The continued inclusion of the EADP program as a "special line item appropriation" by the Texas Legislature attests to their estimate of the program's quality and contribution to the field of emergency managements. This special line item appropriation ($75,000 per year) was recently granted for the fourth consecutive biennium.

North Texas EADP faculty and staff members were instrumental in coordinating the efforts of the Texas State Fire Commission, the Coordinating Board, community colleges, and four-year universities in the enhancement of the community college Fire Science curriculum. This upgrade changed the existing Associate of Applied Science Degree (Fire Science) to an Associate of Science in the discipline, thus easing the transfer of community college course work to the four-year BS degrees offered by Texas universities. This program will have long-range impact, on the professional qualifications of fire fighters and emergency managers--resulting in better emergency preparedness and response through the synergistic effects of coordinated curriculum development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The value and critical need of this singular degree program is now more apparent than at its inception four years ago. This need has been graphically documented with the advent of recent legislation regarding the reporting, handling, and treatment of toxic chemicals. Natural disaster occurrences remain constant, while increasing population densities require an even higher level of jurisdictional cooperation to meet the needs of society.

Vulnerability to technological disasters is multiplying, as nuclear power, toxic chemical use and transportation accidents are adversely affecting our daily lives. New chemicals are increasing at a rate that defies accountability. These potential disasters require a professional cadre of emergency managers to practice the elements of an Integrated Emergency Management System--Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. There is no other program in the country that is committed to the challenge of translating theoretical scientific research information and applying the lessons learned in the training and education of professional emergency managers. The program at the University of North Texas can provide the impetus for other academic programs that must provide this cadre.